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ABSTRACT

This study was conducted to determine how women in the Indian State of Tamil Nadu--where both regional and national network television are available for viewing--perceive the role of television in helping the cause of women. A television content analysis was done for two subsequent weeks, focusing on the portrayal of women in the programs, and the cumulative findings of this analysis were then compared with the views of the respondents. Analyses of the data indicated that: (1) television had established itself as a vital source of information for all women, regardless of economic/educational status; (2) television was a primary source of entertainment for those at home, i.e., the elderly and lower middle and middle class housewives; (3) upper middle and upper class women felt their needs were not being met by regional television programs; (4) there was a marked difference in the portrayal of women between regional and national network televisions; (5) regional viewers were concerned with traditional dress of women on television; and (6) advertisements were of interest, but educated women resented advertisements suggestive of women's secondary status. It was concluded that television should not perpetuate outmoded moral and social values that have been imposed on women in the past. (10 references) (CGD)

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A STUDY ON WOMEN VIEWERS OF MADRAS

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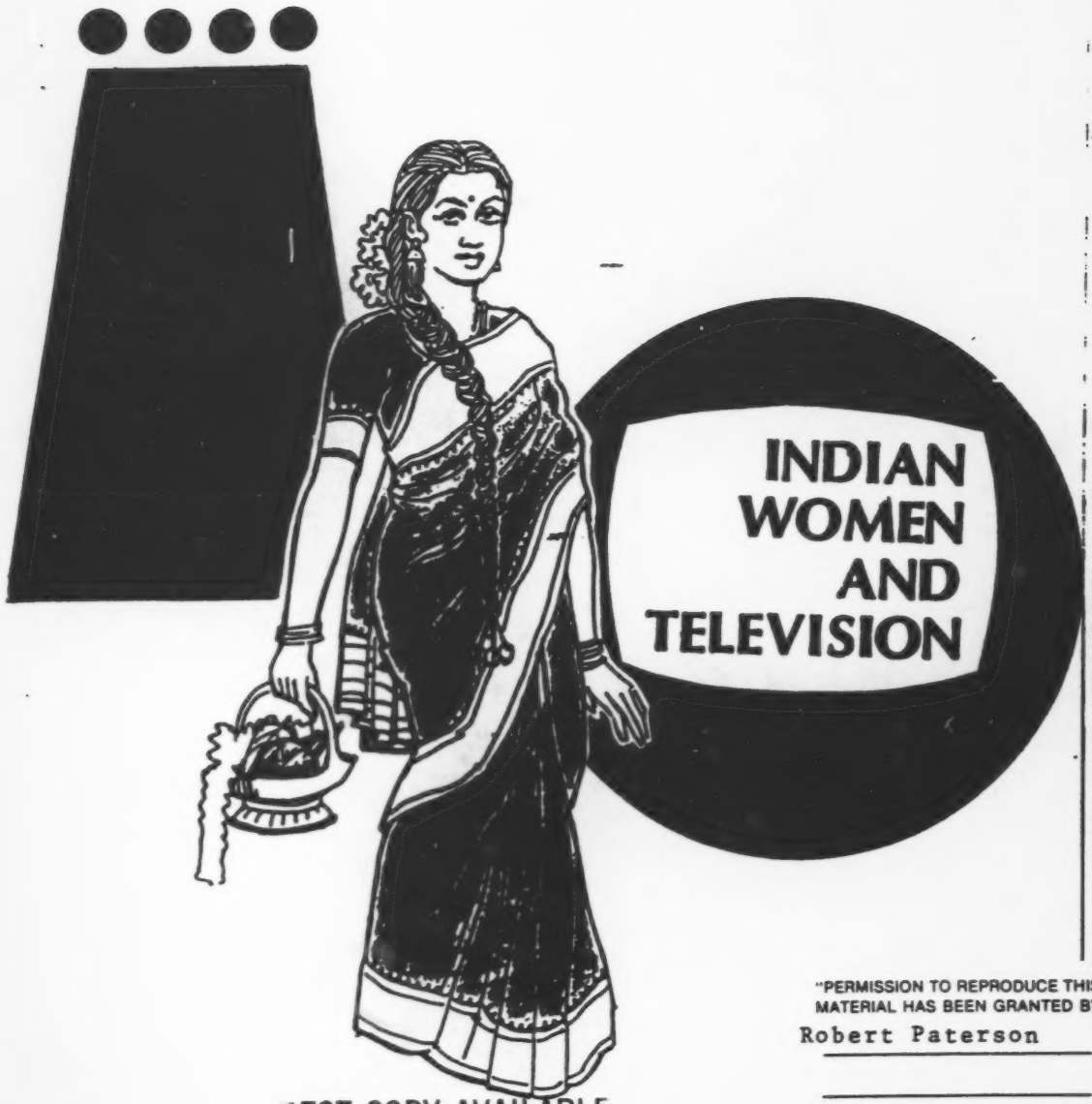

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INDIAN WOMEN AND TELEVISION

(A study on the Women Viewers of Madras, India.)

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INDIA

Paper Presented to the 1986 'International Television Studies Conference'

during July 1986, at London.

INDIAN WOMEN AND TELEVISION

The woman power is a vital component of the social energy of a country. The contribution of women to human civilization, historically speaking is very significant. Women's participation in the development of the country is realised, though grudgingly everywhere, ofcourse, with a 'Male Bias'. Hence, the emphasis on 'Women' in this paper, and also this paper attempts to look at whether the 'Male Bias' has given rise to 'Media Bias' especially in relation to Television in India.

Women in India

The image of women in Indian Society arouses feelings of ambivalence. Mythology has been moulding people's ideas in a subtle manner which created the image of a woman as self-sacrificing, meekly serving and gladly facing hardships for her husband and to uphold her family prestige. At the same time, many Goddesses (Lakshmi, Saraswathi, Parvathi) were also created who commanded devotion and veneration even from the menfolk. But as for the concept of 'Dharma' in Hindu religion was concerned, the women were considered detrimental to man's spritual progress and his salvation. The tenets of 'Manu', the Hindu law giver fostered a deep rooted belief that women in a traditional Hindu Society had no independent existence. As a result of it, the Indian culture developed malignant tendencies giving rise to many 'social-evils' like, polygamy and prostitution among women degenerating their status still further. Amongst the influences which affected change in the "social outlook on proper place for women in society", the first and foremost was the western influence. The close contacts with Western cultural traditions,literature and education during the British regime in India in 18th&19th century, had set Indian leaders thinking. They agitated against the deplorable

conditions of women and realised the customs prevelent were intermingled with the religious beliefs. So the social movements started with their religious reforms to pave way to social reforms. O'Malley had observed, "The impact of West on Indian civilization has brought about changes that are more fundamental in the case of women than men. To men it brought a new conception of the world of its material resources, ethical standards and political possibilities, but to women, potently a new conception of themselves. If men reasserted themselves as citizens in a new India, women revalued themselves as human beings in a new social order". (O'Malley,1941). The industrial changes in India, at the turn of the century led to new social practices with urbanization and breaking of joint families. The women had to play different social roles, and their life and behaviour deviated significantly from previous practices.

Education was the initial factor in such deviations. After independence (1947), education had experienced phenomenal growth in India. The percentage of literacy among women has increased from 0.69% in 1901 to 24.88% in 1981, though still there is a wide disparity between men and women education. (It is almost double with men). This has posed a great strain in marital adjustments. There is often a complete divorce between family life and public life, between intellectual conviction and social behaviour of men. Hence, the concept of literacy was not associated with the learning skills, but creating the conditions for acquisition of a critical conciousness of the contradictions of society in which women were, and stimulate thinking and action in a positive direction. Literacy is a process of liberation for women. But despite the educational standing, thousands of years of customs and traditions, walls of institutional obstruction, rigid caste system and vested interest groups and reactionary forces, defeat all efforts at social change and development of new social status for masses of Indian women. Society is yet

to succeed in framing the required norms to enable women to fulfil the multiple roles that they are expected to play in India, today.

In Tamil Nadu (one of the developed States in India) the sex ratio is 51:49 (census, 1981). This is one of the female deficiency states in the country, causing concern. This can be attributed to many factors - high mortality rate among women, infantile, maternal and pregnancy wastage, 'son syndrome', neglected health, etc,.

Women as participants in economic activity in the State has been accepted. The economic necessity pulls out women from the homes but at the same time apply societal pressure on her to perform her domestic role as well. In Madras the capital city of Tamil Nadu, 7% of the women are gainfully employed. The figure is very low indeed, and in order to develop and utilise the full potentials of women and there by achieve country's progress, concerted efforts on the part of the policy makers, the educationers and the planners are required. The media are the potentially powerful agents of socialisation and social change and the relationship to women in terms of both portrayal and employment, transcend cultural and class boundaries. Here, the social responsibility of the medium, such as Televisi on, in a country like India is paramount.

Television In India

Television was introduced in India in 1959, with a social commitment. It was entrusted with the responsibility of educating and informing its masses apart from entertaining them. Television is owned by the government in India and has a greater capacity for social control.

Television was introduced in Madras (The capital city of Tamil Nadu), only a decade ago. Tamil Nadu is one of the large States in India occupying 4% of the country's total geographical area with a population of nearly 50 million with 16 million living in the urban set up. The Television centre in Madras caters to

a population of 9.4 millions, covering a geographical area of 18,600 sq.kms. The service range of Madras Television extends to an area of 80 km. radius around Madras. In the early stages, the station was completely regional in its character. During August 1982, all the Televisin centres in the country were connected by a National hook-up after 8.30 pm. and the programmes were telecast keeping in view the multi-lingual and cultural differences of the different states in the country. Today, Indian Television, can boast that it covers nearly 70% of the country's population with more than 180 transmitters set up all over the country, during the last couple of years. This phenomenal growth of Television in the country has led to a series of changes in the political, economic, social and cultural lives of the people. Even the profile of the medium has changed encouraging more sponsors and outside agencies to participate, to cater to the tastes of the millions of its masses.

Feminist Research and Mass Media

The ability of Television to intrigue and absorb the individual is undisputed. Analysts attribute to this 'electronic gadget' psychological powers to control the attitudes and actions of people. When Television provides the viewers with the opportunity to satisfy certain existing needs, in doing so, it has certain unintended influence upon. The way medium chooses themes, structure the dialogue and controls the debate, is a major aspect of its influence. Feminist research into the mass media has shown that women tend to be shown as submissive, passive and are portrayed largely in terms of their sexuality and domesticity while men tend to be shown as dominant, active and authoritative. (Tuchman et al., 1978, Janus, 1977; King and stolt, 1977, Sharpe, 1976, Busby,1975). Males greatly out number females in prime-time Television and in soap operas males discuss professional matters while women discuss romantic relationships, health and domestic matters. (Katxman, 1972). In Television advertisements women clean, launder and cook

while men give orders. (Cantor,1974). In all these cases the media, simply seemed to have reflected the values of a Society and the position of women in that Society. But there was also a possibility that media themselves determined how women should be projected.

In the early 70's the women's libers were portrayed as hostile, man haters (Barr,1977) who stood apart, from the major of non-aggressive 'normal' women. But, more recently, the portrayal of the liberated woman, is as one wants, and occassionally achieves equal status with men. George Gerbner observes the introduction on to American Television of independent powerful women who are portrayed as enforcing rather than challenging the laws that oppress them eg. police woman, Charlie's Angels (Gerbuner, 1978). The fact that heroic women have supplemented heroic men on the screen, points in the way on which the media have taken note of, and reconstructed, feminist issues, in Western countries. British Broadcasting has responded to women as the 'New growth industry' and there were number of Television programmes, especially plays, focussed on women and women's issues. Television play is judged to perform an important social and aesthetic function in the eyes of media practioners as well as the viewers.

The present study

The objective of the present paper is to find out how the Tamilian women (the women of Tamil Nadu) perceive the role of Television in helping the cause of women.

We had interviewed a cross section of women viewers, meeting them ingroups as well as individually trying to ascertain the view, through informal discussions. Later indepth interviews with twenty five opinion leaders, representing different strata of the society,of different educational,social,occupational status were conducted.Those working in the medium were also included in the sample. A content

analysis of the Television was done for two subsequent weeks with two groups logging the programmes and filling up the analysis sheet, on alternate days. The analysis sheet gave information on four different aspects of programme content.

(a) Number of women appearing in each item of the programme.

(b) The roles the women were assigned, which has taken care of their occupational status as well.

(c) The costume in which they appeared.

(d) The treatment given to the women characters in relation to the theme or content of the programme.

The factual cumulative findings of the content analysis, were then compared with the general views expressed by the women viewers taking into account the portrayal of women. The commercial films and excerpts from them which are often screened by Television, News, Children's programmes and Educational Television programmes (that are being telecast in the mornings) were excluded while analysing the programme content.

Indepth Interviews

The interviews and the content analysis have the same reference period. (March'86). To eliminate any bias the interviews and programme logging took place simultaneously, by different researchers who did not meet till the entire job was completed. We have intentionally omitted the opinion leaders among women experts/exponents in different walks of life. Every interview took nearly two hours. For the purpose of the present report all the interviews are edited and presented briefly. The criteria for the selection of respondents were they should be willing for an indepth interview and they should be regular TV viewers,

if not all the programmes atleast a few selected items; they should be able to speak with conviction and they should have a point to make, whether negatively or positively about TV. The time factor was also a criterion, as all the interviews were conducted within a fortnight, the same time when the content analysis was going on. The interviews are termed as case studies.

The Sample:

In the indepth interviews, the respondents in their age group ranged between 18-82 years, most of them from 26-45 years. Two thirds of them were married and the remaining were without a spouse, either single, divorced/separated or widowed. Among the 25 interviews, three of them were from the lower strata and another three from the high income bracket. The rest belonged to either middle or upper-middle income group.

There were nine housewives and two students. The rest were gainfully employed among whom seven were either professionals, or working as executives. Avid viewers of Television programmes constituted 50% of those who were interviewed and the remaining, were selective in viewing. But most of them were indiscriminate about viewing regional or national programmes.

A brief outline of all the interviews that were conducted are given in the following pages.

Case Study-1

Dr. N, aged 42, holding a senior executive position in a private sector says. "Sorry for being blunt. No amount of your Television Programmes can ever promote the cause of women. Inspite of having achieved something in life, still there is an underlying discrimination. It is still the man's world whether at the office, at home, or while you are driving on the road. Your Television in the name of promoting the culture, has never done anything concrete to make women to think for themselves. It goes on perpetuating the same moral and social values that have been imposed on women since the days of Manu. Haven't you realised that Manu has gone and now it is Rajeev?".

Case Study-2

Mrs. C. Aged 37, a graduate non - working belonging to a middle class family feels that television has definitely helped in enriching her knowledge. She says "even if there were no films on Television we can still go to the theatre and watch, but for programmes like News, Quiz time, and Science programmes, if there was no Televsion I wonder how many people would be able to watch. I enjoy watching Quiz time on sundays though I don't know the answer for most of the questions; Still, I have a sense of participation".

She further adds, "there should be a special programme for women alone apart from " Homes " Programmes, in the regional language. There should also be a programme exclusively for women in the National Net work so that women in each part of the country are aware about the status and development of their folks in the entire country as a whole".

Case Study-3

M. aged 28, with a post graduate degree remained a housewife by choice, is a happy contented woman having all praise for Doordarshan. "I don't know why people should criticise Television. For a few thousands they pay, they expect everything out of Television. Too much of Television addiction is bad. Why do you allow an electronic instrument all the time to run your life; reflect your tastes; give you entertainment knowledge, information etc. I switch on my Television set. if I find a programme boring, I cooly switch it off and attend to my other work. It is a blessing in disguise. I don't crib. I think may be that programme is enjoyed by others, but I can't relish it. That is all. You have been doing a fine job. Go ahead. Being a Government medium, I can under stand your problems'.

"Regarding how women are portrayed in Television, it is okay. They have been given a fair chance in all Television Programmes. I don't think they are badly projected. Even in advertisements, I find it is lovely viewing a home with happy children and happy parents. It lifts your spirits".

Case Study-4

Mrs. T. aged 48, married working as a telephone supervisor has no time to sit before the Television in a relaxed mood even on sundays. The Television is on through out the transmission time for her retired husband but she watches only plays, film programmes and News. She feels some News readers have bad diction and also does not like the make-up and garlish jwellery of a few Tamil News readers in striking contrast to National News readers. She does not watch any programme beyond 9.30p.m. as she has to get up every day before 4.00 a.m. to do all the house hold chores and start to work. She says "Television has not effectively brought forth the problems of the working women like me; my earnings have helped me in building a house, getting gadgets etc. They provide material comfort but where is the human element?. We women are just money earning machines. In the past when women were not educated they were treated as 'Child Bearing Machines'. Now the role has shifted but the status is the same, in one way or other she is still a machine, this attitude is only an extension of our social values. I wonder whether Television has the potential to initiate a change in this direction".

Case Study-5

Ms. R aged 32, a graduate working in a bank is divorced and has also re married. She says "Convention, social stigma and religion have played havoc with the lives of Indian Women. Women are afraid of change, the same people who sympathised with me when I suffered under a saddist husband also raise their eyebrows now. Even my own mother does not approve of my second marri age. Well I have the conviction and courage to face it all, but I wonder how many women are silently suffering what I had undergone earlier. Television can and should produce programmes for women inspiring them to face challenges and take a bold step in the direction of progress".

"I don't watch women's programmes these days especially when I see two people sitting with a flower vase in front and start yapping. Tamil plays are fairly good but the same set appears in all plays with the office walls painted in marble designs. They totally lack aesthetic sense and reality. I watch them because it is there".

R feels that rural and educational programmes do not have any meaning for an urban middle class viewer. They want only entertainment and information relevant to their living pattern. She thinks national programmes are enjoyable for intelligent viewers as they are realistic and of high order, production wise. She says there is a marked difference between the sponsored Hindi serials and local Tamil plays. "Our Tamil plays only boost the ego of men and the working women is always potrayed as flippant and the non-working woman as a virtuous home maker. But I do not blame your Doordarshan because our society does not accept indivi- dualistic and rational thinking women. That is why I enjoy the Hindi serial Khanadan which shows women are strong minded charac ters. Even the serial "Hum Log" was okay as one side the mother is suffering in the Sita style and on the other side there are characters like Budky who wants to break away from the social norms".

Before she ended the interview R almost pleaded,"Do something about the blue walls, striped curtains and steel furniture please. Television needs a new wardrobe first".

Case Study - 6.

Mrs. D. aged 35 years, a graduate house-wife belonging to an upper-middle class says, "many of my kind are thoroughly bored at home without having anything constructive to do. I do not want to associate myself with the ladies clubs because of various hang-ups. So,my socialisation stops with my neighbours and relatives.

I ardently switch on my TV set at 5.30 p.m. everyday. But unfortunately there are hardly any programme to catch the attention of people like me. Even in your "Homes" programme you repeat the same old items what we do at home. We need programmes to take us some what closer to the working women, like what happens in the different office set-ups and how the women, conduct them selves in such situations. Also take us to some picnic spots, like how they show a happy family some the advertisements."

Case Study - 7

Ms. P. aged 35, Doctorate in Literature remaining single, do not watch all the programmes on Doordarshan. But English News, she says, is a must. She says "on occassions where I had sat and religiously watched programmes for a few days, I have not come across many programmes that would hold my interest. I get bugged by the way women are projected in TV programmes. The women of South are more tradition bound, I accept. But when you show a modern educated girl why do you project her as a flippant, arrogant one, dressed in western clothes flouting the existing conventions. This need not be true always. Modernity in dress does not mean progressive thinking. Why do you not show that even tradition bound women are very receptive to new ideas and challenges in life?".

Case Study - 8

Ms. K. aged 18, student belonging to middle class income group feels that TV should give more stress to Youth and Students. "Even in Youth Programmes only adults participate. We want a platform to discuss our problems. Especially, we girl students face problems of Commutting, Social mixing, Parental pressure, Examination problems, etc. But they never present it properly on TV. I watch News, Plays, Quiz and Sports apart from any film on TV. I don't bother about other programmes including your "Homes".

If the position of women is not good, it is because they are uneducated. Educated women are very smart, Your programmes can help women by showing the achievements of women in all their roles. Now you project women in a monotonous way as mothers and wives, if they are working they fall in love with their colleagues. Are not our women achieving more than this?".

Case Study - 9

Mrs. V. aged 60, a house-wife without any formal education looks towards TV as an excellent medium for indoor entertainment. She says, "In our days things were different, we were considered weak in everything. We had to depend on men. But now even my grand-daughter is capable of thinking what is right and wrong. So your TV should help to shape the minds of these young ones in a positive direction, and also teach music, dance and language to them".

Case Study - 10

Mrs. M. aged 36, a house-wife belonging to a higher economic group, spending her leisure time in social service and fellowship activities says, "I am not a TV buff. But the TV is on throughout, for others to watch. My little son loves TV advertisements; my mother-in-law, everything under the sun;- I mean even the test chart on TV. I watch 'Manal Matchi' (Homes) occassionally, but I feel there is nothing in it to cater to the educated and sophisticated crowd. But I don't miss it and I think the programme should be more for the less advantages groups only. While talking of women's position M. says whether working or non-working the position is the same and the media exploits. TV plays, except for the Hindi serials,other programmes do not show realistic strong minded personalities. I hate to see women crying on the screen and men pacifying them. Words like chastity, morality and motherhood, why should they be associated only with wo men?. We don't want man to take a patronizing attitude. We can take care of ourselves.

For people like us there should be more News features in the regional language. I love 'Janwani' and look forward to such problems in the State level".

Case Study - 11

Mrs. F. aged 55, who is a teacher in a high school, watches all programmes up to 10.30 p.m. She says, "Television should give importance to the education of the children in the villages and other remote areas, than just thinking about in entertainment lines. I feel TV has a more important role to play in the lines of education and information. I feel good educative programmes like 'Cosmos' must be translated in regional language to facilitate children to understand what's being said. Why have cheap entertainment like films which have an adverse effect on the children?. Doesn't the policy of Television say first information, education and lastly only entertainment?" she asks.

Mrs. F. feels TV is doing a good job in providing information. I watch both English and Tamil News regularly. Women's programme are also quite edcuative. Coming to entertainment I feel there is an element of vulgarity in jokes in plays and films. Why dont' you censor them so that it does not lead the young ones imagination to go astray".

"One more request, I'd like to make is that television shows a widow in a play as a pathetic, dependent person. Being a widow myself I'am totally against this sort of a portrayal. Widows do lead a happy and independent life. A man is not everything in life".

Case Study - 12

Mrs. B. aged 48 married, self-employed owning an industrial unit, says, "I am too busy to watch TV regularly however the set is on for the old people at home. However, so far what I have seen on TV, I wish to say a few things. TV cannot educate people who are already educated. So only for News I mainly watch TV rest all secondary. The whole concept of cutting TV time under various head ings itself is wrong. It limits flexibility. Once people see the title 'Vayalum- Vazhvum'(Rural) or 'Adult Education', they switch off without knowing it might contain some important items. Instead you can have two basic divisions the edu cated" and the uneducated as their values and attitudes vastly differ.

B opines that though she does not understand 'Hindi' much, Hindi serials are superior in quality and content; and there is a touch of realism in them. She also loves wacthing advertisements on TV which are a visual treat".

I don't think TV has played any constructive role in enhancing the status of women. In my opinion the women participants are not smart. I don't know where the problem lies - whether we have a dearth of beautiful faces or your Kendra cannot locate them."

Case Study 13

Mrs.F. aged 40,a doctor by profession, practising, finds time to watch TV only after 7.30p.m. but does not seem to miss much of the programmes scheduled earlier.

Acording to her "the women are not projected in any derogatory manner but are given equal treatment along with the men particlpants. The women are dressed according to the tradition and there is no obsenity of any sort. Infact even your advertisements are pretty decent, I should say".

Being a doctor, she has a point to make regarding the health programmes. She says "The health problems are disscussed only at the surface level. The problem is common to all but the complications differ according to one's economic, educational and ecological conditions.So any disease has to be dicussed keeping in view the urban rural conditions and also incidence".

Case Study 14

Ms. G. aged 23, single, a post graduate, working at a junior executive level, holds that TV is more cherished by the elderly people than of her age group. However, she enjoys Quiz, Western music, Sports, Plays and popular Films on TV. Ofcourse, for News TV is a must.

According to her, "Advertisements telecast on TV do not fit with our culture especially when the men and women are shown in revealing swim suits running towards the beach. At one end you cast plays where women are given a traditional role and at the other end you yourself introduce the glamour element without being aware of it. In what way are you trying to educate or support the cause of women?".

Case Study - 15

Ms. S. aged 68, a social worker, widowed at a young age, belonging to a middle income group watches all TV programmes, depending on her leisure. She says, "I strongly feel TV is the only medium that can really help in improving the status of women. In our society women suffer endlessly. There are the single, the deser ted, the seperated and the widowed who exist and not all have the courage to lead their life fully. Do not give the impression women exist only for men. They appear to be frivolus and vulnerable in your plays. You have to mount a lot of programme on self-improvement and self-reliance. Also show visually the social service institutions, the type of facilities rendered and the addresses of such institu tions". She further adds "Kids are a delight to watch in ads. The Hindi programm es are a waste in the South. I think they give very good programmes,but what is the use?. Who understands them?".

Case Study - 16

Mrs. E aged 55, working as a nurse for her doctor husband, seems to watch a number of programmes on TV. She says, "Some times the titles are more attractive and misleading that I end up watching documentaries. Added to this, you also seem to repeat your Adult Education programme twice a week. Thrusting on the urban educated viewers your developmental programme, for the sake of a few thousand who watch TV in the rural areas around Madras is unpardonable. May be you can have two channels and utilize the time to give more programmes for the urban group".

E feels, that women are treated with utmost dignity in Doordarshan programmes, and there is nothing to grumble about.

Case Study - 17

Mrs. M. aged 30, illiterate, belonging to a low income group, is a TV addict,in respect of filmbased programmes. She knows and understands very little of politics. Her loyalties are film based and educational programmes she ignores, as there is neither 'story' nor 'film stars' in them. She says, "Women are treated well by men. They get drunk and harass women. But women of my class do not tolerate such things. If my husband ill-treats me I'll simply chuck him. Let me see whether he can bring up the children without my help", she says with confidence.

She feels that women should be educated, but asks "What can TV do for that?. If I have the money I will send my children to school. Can TV tell us how to get the money?". According to Mrs.M, "TV should have only film based programmes. We forget our worries seeing stars acting and fighting on the scenes, we laugh and cry along with the characters. We enjoy it".

Case Study - 18

Mrs. R. aged 82, belonging to an upper-middle class family watches TV programme very regularly. She says, "To old people like us TV is the real boon. I never miss any programme. I watch Plays, Films, Music concerts and film based programmes. I hate watching agricultural and rural programmes. They do not hold my interests".

Mrs. R. feels women have gone in for a lot of changes, unlike her days, she finds a lot of women working in offices in par with men. "I think TV has helped in no way to the cause of women. I look upon the medium only as an entertainer. But I have nothing to crib about the presentation of women".

Mrs. R. also added that she finds the dance sequences from Films quite entertaining and says it's not obscene. She generally enjoys watching TV and is full of praises for the medium.

Case Study - 19

Ms. I. aged 29, belonging to a middle income group, holding a part-time job says, "People like me with neither a marriage nor a proper job, do not imagine a colourful future. If the life is not colourful, atleast can't you make the programmes interesting and jubilent. Except for your Films, Plays and Music programmes, the rest all are either a discussion or a narration or an interview. I feel more depressed. Why don't you highlight the plight of young women like me in your women's programme. In fact the real life stories are much more interesting than fiction".

Case Study - 20

Mrs. H. 34 years, a post graduate who helps out her husband in his business watches only National Programmes. She feels, "TV is just a mirror showing what's happening in the society. I would'nt blame the media because it is still a man's world atleast in Madras.

Leave alone women's issue, I do not think TV is able to focus any other issue sharply. It does not do any research before presenting a programme. I feel research is a must for a programme that is going to be viewed, commented, criticised and scrutinised by the whole mass. Why do you approach people like me afterwards, asking for our comments?. Do it before. And if you think you are really going improve your programmes by our suggestions, do it. Otherwise don't waste my time and your money" she said categorically.

Case Study - 21

Mrs. U. aged 39, a journalist - novelist, mother of three children views TV in a different angle. She says, "TV, in a developing country should be used only for educational and developmental purposes. We have made a mistake by making it an entertainment medium", she laments. "I still love watching developmental and educational programmes, though they are not meant for me, because atleast they have an element of honesty or reality about them".

As a women activist, she feels that TV is doing more harm than good to wo men. "We see women's roles stereo-typed, to satisfy the ego of the male-oriented society. TV plays have the maximum audience but here women are made fun of and projected in such a distorted vision. I am yet to see an individual in any Tamil play who stand out for the cause of women. A recent Tamil play propogated the time-worn theory that all women should marry their rapists. What sort of a logic is this?. Rape is a criminal offence and the criminal should be punished and not presented a bouquet. If a man steals a sweet from a stall, you do not present him with the whole stall. Do you?.

All the plays depict women secondary to men. Why?. Atleast I am happy about the Hindi serials, I love the women of Khandan, strong, determined and poised. They are never presented as black and white, but there is a whole array of shades. That is why they seem real. Until a few years back, programmes meant for women were interesting. Now they seem to have exhausted of all sub jects. Discussions fail to hold viewers' attention, as most participants lack the ability of verbal expression. Extensive training is needed for telegenic presentation but most comperes do not even have the basics of a compere. Women's programm es should be produced in real situations, showing the problems and plight of women, there expectations and solutions, they get in the place of work or home. But are they really taking interest in producing good programmes for the cause of women?. I still wonder".

Case Study - 22

Ms. S. age 38, literate, working as a cook, mother of five children, is seperated from her husband.

Ms. S. says, "I watch News almost regularly because that is the only source of information to me as I cannot read English news papers and my house owner does not buy Tamil papers". She feels the timings for women's programme are not appropriate because working people watch programmes between 7.00pm&9.00pm and since the women's programme is telecast earlier, they miss out such informative programmes. Ms. S. understands the educative role of TV and says, "TV should teach languages like English, which is very potent in getting a job. Personally I feel every women to be self-dependent and in order to be self-dependent, she must know some art or craft. TV should help out here by teaching craft and publicising institutes that run job-oriented craft courses. I feel TV is doing justice in presenting women and have nothing to complain. It shows both types of women the lazy one's who lead a cozy life and also the hard ones like me who struggle for survival".

In spite of not being higher up in status or in education, Ms. S. is very clear in her thinking and level headed. She knows what is entertainment and what is education and the need for both in the media.

At the end of the interview she puts in saying, "Ah' I did not mention, we enjoy watching the ads. My children know some of the ads by-heart. But only thing is I cannot afford to buy for them the things they ask for, after seeing some ads".

Case Study - 23

Mrs. S. aged 33, a post graduate, happily married with two kids, popular News reader of Madras Television says, "By chance I entered this line and I am trying to do what best I can. No regrets at all".

She further adds that, "I enjoy the security this job offers me, unlike the film world where a film star has to do a lot of gimmicks to reach the top. But even this over exposure has its drawbacks. I am too much talked about and some times even negatively. I have learn to accept my role as it is. My being popular has not brought out any advantages because I keep off from people".

"As such I don't like to make any difference between a man and a woman and I want Television to make people aware and think irrespective of sex. If I find any of our programmes where women are found playing second fiddle displa ying outlandish sentiments I cannot stand it".

Regarding women's development or liberation she says, the whole word "Libera tion" has been mis-conceived. And if you have to project a liberated person I think, the author, the producer, the actor, all the three should know and expereince the meaning of liberation".

She feel News reading is a minor part of her and there are other activities in life that had given her the contentment. She owes this sense of contentment to her spouse.

She concludes saying, "I enjoy being myself, but I don't think I am liberated because liberation means a person should know the purpose of his or her existence. I am yet to find out".

Case Study - 24

Ms. L. aged 30, married, Announcer in Madras Doordarshan says, "I enjoy my popularity. I get things done faster. But at times it is a nuisance. They recognise you wherever you go and start commenting about TV programmes for which you are not responsible". Sometimes it is embarassing, just in front of me they will be discussing about me indirectly".

"The elderly people associate me with the Film world and do not think high of me".

"I enjoy being popular. There is a feeling of importance, created within you, when you make some important announcements".

"I don't mind quitting this job for better, because I have seen the charm of it. Before I loose my charm, I like to get out".

I watch interviews with popular personalities, Film songs and Documentaries if they are interesting. I like watching "Towards Progress" in Network. I enjoy 'Quiz time".

There is a big gap projected of women on Madras Television in comparison to Delhi Television. Network women are treated on par with women. On Madras TV it is interesting to note that you highlight certain problems telling people that you should not do it. In the process you teach more of the problem than the solu tion to arrive at. Most of the plays exhibit this tendency. But Delhi Doordarshan look at women from a different angle".

"I think in the name of Women's Development, we need not do anything for this. The educated women are okay. They can take care of themselves. Whatever you are going to teach for them will be no use at all in my opinion".

Case Study - 25

Mrs. G. aged 43, a producer for "Homes" programme in Madras TV says, "People more often comment on the programme without watching. We cover a wide range of subjects on women's issues and whereever it is possible we project it in the visual form. But we cannot avoid interviews because visuals alone cannot explain the magnitude of a problem. There might be a repetition of certain programmes or issues in other programmes as well (eg. Dowry, Alcoholism, Drug addiction etc.) but I cannot condemn this because the message has to be reinforced and also if a person misses one programme they will know about it in the one following it".

Mrs. G. accepts that women are portrayed in a traditional way but that is how the viewers want it. "I remember having produced a programme on divorce. It was telecast on a friday evening. Some of the sentimental viewers of Madras reacted strongly against such topics being discussed on an auspicious time of an auspicious day. TV being a mass medium has to reflect the taste of the majority of our viewers".

Mrs.G says, "there are plenty of opportunities given to women who work in the medium as producers, enngineers, researchers, apart from those appearing on TV, as News readers, Announcers and Talents. But how they are being treated is a different question. We do have our own problems".

"Giving equal participation on par with men in our programmes is a must I agree. But the percentage of women experts, in certain areas, in certain walks of life compared to men is very limited. So their participation is also equally limited. But I do not think we have ever left any prominent personalities with being covered".

that Television, thinks of the role of the women, outside their homes as well. Economic necessity has pulled out many women in the worksphere and the dual career lifestyle of the women has given rise to more stress and strain, when they strive to meet the demands of the traditional family pattern and their social obligations.

Madras Programmes

Plays/Skits in a fortnight	Women in roles	Wife/Mother	Working women/others
10	16	13	3

National Programmes.

Play/Skits in fortnight	Women in roles	Wife/Mother	Working women/others
25	54	35 (about 11 are also working women)	29

In National programmes, the women in many cases are portrayed as professionals without any sex bias. In programmes like "Sach Ki Parichayin" (The voice of the truth) and "Focus" there were women doctors, lawyers and workers talking to the viewers. The major distinction between National and Madras Programmes is that the women not only play the role of a housewife, but are also shown as business executives, teachers, social workers, and doctors, working on par with men. The women are projected as strong minded, individualistic, characters. Hence, the upper middle class and upper class viewers of Madras seem to prefer such serials like 'khandan' (A sponsored serial where there were many independent characters of women) and 'Rajani' (A sponsored serial where a woman boldly exposes the wrong-doers in the society).

It has been observed from the indepth interviews, given in the preceding pages that television has established its strong stand in the media world as a vital source of information for every category of women and a primary source of entertainment for those remaining indoors. The housewives and the elderly hold that it "is an excellent medium for indoor entertainment"; "It has enriched the knowledge in every field". "A boon to those women who are struck to their homes". Their negative comments on television is that "too many Hindi programmes in National Network".(there is a language barrier for the people of Tamil Nadu). "Settings in Television should get a face lift".

The housewives suggest that women should be shown as strong minded persons in their work situation. The media should teach music, dance and language lessons and should have more programmes to tell them how to spend their time usefully and gainfully.

The students among women require a platform to discuss about their issues like problems of commuting, social mixing etc. Monotonous, stereotyped portrayals of women in programmes are abhorred.

The professionals and the women executives view television more favourably from their information needs. For programmes like News, Newsline, Quiz programmes and the coverage of International events, they depend on Television. Regarding the portrayal of women in Television shows, their opinion is divided. A few think Television should reflect the culture of the Society and it does, whether it is palatable to their sense or not.But others hold that tradition bound women are portrayed positively and the modern women negatively. The term 'Liberation' has a negative connotation, that they show the women as arrogant, flippant characters, in a modern dress.(Not the traditional saree but pants or jeans). But most

of the educated class appreciate the character portrayal of women in National programmes especially in the serial'Khandan' that was telecast in the recent past, where women characters who were portrayed as powerful personalities. They felt that the local programmes should follow suit. They suggested to "project even tradition bound women as the ones who look forward to new ideas and chall enges in life". "The concept of liberation should be understood and experienced by the author, the producer and the actor before they visually project the same". "There need not be any special treatment meted out to women. But treat them equally and make every person in the society to think for himself or herself". There was one professional who was pessimistic about Doordarshan's role in changing or enhancing the status of women.

Those belonging to the clerical cadre feel that television can definitely help in trying to allivate the sufferings of the women to a certain extent. They want more programmes on television, to highlight the problems of the working women and also that of others who fight against odds without the support of menfolk. They generally enjoy all the entertainment programmes on television. A teacher said that educational programmes like 'Cosmos' in regional language is a must. They want serials in the regional language similar to that of National programmes.

Those belonging to the low income group acknowledge the contribution of television as entertaining and at the same time educating. The illiterates/semi-literates do not like too many educative programmes without entertainment element. They also do not prefer programmes aimed at rural audience to be forced on them. They realise the necessity of having to learn some art or craft for their survival and they feel the media should teach such crafts, so that they can become self-dependent.

For the middle income group television is a mini-theatre at less cost. Also they enjoy the other programmes as well. A few feel that they have nothing to complain about the portrayal of women in television programmes as they are dressed decently.

The upper middle group perceive television as a medium of entertainment only now and then, but more for information only. The younger generation belonging to this income bracket feel television provides such companionship to the elderly that they do not grumble much, even if the young couple goes out very often in the evenings.

These people feel that TV should concentrate more in producing programmes which are true to life situations,but at the same time,not to lean towards the portrayal of the chaste, the timid, the sacrificing types. They also suggest that TV should look at its settings with more aesthetic and colour sense.

The high income group talks of TV with sceptical note. They have VCR's and other gadgets to supplement and compliment, what TV can offer. They are not much TV dependent.

Those working in the medium, had felt that enough coverage has been given in TV to highlight the issues of women, and the educated women are capable of taking care of themselves and Television's responsibility lies in making an individual to think irrespective of whether it is a male or a female.

The informal interview with more than one hundred women viewers in the city lend support to the observations made below.

A keen awareness exist among the upper class and upper middle class women of Madras regarding literacy, cultural and political happenings. The women of the lower middle class and lower classes also exhibit an interest in local politics and cinema. The glamour of the tinsel world has an overpowering effect on the

women. The middle class women, even if they lack formal training, still show some marked knowledge of and appreciation for classical music and dance. These women lay a great stress on education as an investment for the future. The cultural interaction between women is active and alive. The urban housewives no longer remain in their cocoons. Except few, many had already associated themselves with some social organisation or exhibited interest in such activities. There are nearly 150 women organisations in the city alone, out of which 64 are registered under W.I.A.(Women's Indian Association).

Despite education, tradition plays a dominating role in the lives of these women. Though receptive to modern ideas, they zealously guard their customs and rituals. Even the educated woman observes 'fasting' on special days and performs the 'poojas'(worship) to extend her husband's life span. Food habits remain unchanged the traditional South Indian style, though they learn to cook other dishes as well. They spend enormous money on clothing, but the Western dress, is still a taboo for the married women. Jewels obviously expose class, with diamond earrings a must among the well to do. The married women wear the 'Mangalsutra'(the symbol of marital status), attaching great sentiments and significance. The modern woman of Madras generally does not wear much make-up or use lipstick. She is draped in a traditional saree, with simple jewellery but can converse freely in English. The cocktail party culture is yet to infiltrate into Madras. The middle class women uses her leisure time for her club activities, visits musical concerts during the season, and visits temples during the festival time. TV viewing occupies a major part of her evening. Film based programmes are the hot favourites of women of all age groups and of all classes, though the appeal that each film holds differs in view of their different age and economic grouping to which they be-long. To the uneducated poor, it is an escape from the daily grind of the realities

and to others a mode of relaxation. Cinema, as a main source of entertainment is accepted rather than questioned. Invariably,the rating of viewership for film based programmes on TV, has the highest scoring. The responsibility of TV is much more in this regard as it has to aim at giving educatinal programmes and at the same time provide attractive alternatives for feature films, so that the common masses are weaned from the commercial film world.

Generally, women when questioned about the depiction of women in TV prog ramme immediately talk about their physical presence, the mode of make-up and dress of those who participate, rather than the total concept of women as a politi cal or social force. Even the educated is initially more concerned about the un matching jewellery of an announcer rather than the insulting dialogue in a particular programme. It makes one wonder if women still continue to think of themselves as mere objects of beauty, ornamenting the visual media. The same logic extends to the choice of the announcers/participants who always look tradition-al. A woman with short hair or in western clothes invokes an immediate negative reaction from the viewer, because it does not go with the cultur of the South and culture of the Tamils, in particular.

Advertisements are loved by children and women alike. Using women for advertising beauty products is not resented. But the progressive thinking women condemn advertisements selling a particular product to enhance women's beauty lest she will be rejected in matrimonial market or her father having the necessity to save for the daughter's marriage. "Looking at women as liabilities and men as assets are projected in these ads," they comment.

Though a lot is said about equality and liberty for women from the traditional clutches, a majority of them hold that women have to be chaste but men also should remain in the same way and those who are 'raped' are not pure. Intercaste/ Inter religious marriages, widow/divorcee marriages are still considered reformatory.

The middle class and upper middle class women accept such marriages. But if it infiltrates in their family circle,there is resentment.

Working or non-working, women enjoy house keeping, try out new recipies or indulge in crafts. The recipies and crafts shown on TV awaken a curiosity in all women.

Religious rituals are deeprooted in the minds of all. The religious festivals are observed with utmost sanctity, gay and gaiety. The convent educated, the Hindi knowing upper middle class and the upper class women face an identity crisis. With their Western values and South Indian culture, they are aliented from the programmes of Madras Television. They prefer National programmes to regional programmes.

Content Analysis

On all week days, Madras Television transmits programmes for a duration of five to six hours in the evenings. During week-ends it extends from 10hrs to 14hrs(approximately). The transmission starts with local programmes and at 9.00p.m. National Network takes over and the same programmes are relayedthrought the country for its 400 millions viewers. The News covering National and International events is relayed in English, daily in the National programmes. Apart form News, the National programmes covers a wide range of subjects of National interest, Quiz programmes, Interviews with prominent personalities in all walks of life, sponsored serials in Hindi, Foreign popular serials, National programme of Music and Dance, programmes promoting Scientific temper, Sports items etc. Hindi being the official language and is spoken in many parts of the country, the programmes are mainly telecast in Hindi or English.

The content analysis of the programmes telecast by Madras Television, over a fortnight revealed certain factual findings regarding the portrayal of women. These findings are then compared with the relevant views of the respondents of the interviews either to substantiate or refute.

Duration of Women's Participation:-

If we take the participation of men and women in different programmes, it looks like both men and women seem to occupy the same amount of time on the Television screen. But when we actually add up the time the women are seen on any day, on an average it amounts to nearly 40% of the total transmission (kindly note we are excluding commercial movies, excerpts from them, News, Children's programme and Educational Television programmes. In the following table, the distribution of time allotted on the whole in a week is worked out and also the break up between Madras and National Programmes. (The minutes are being rounded off to the nearest '5' or '0' in all tables).

Day	Duration of Trans.		Madras		National(Delhi)	
	Mts.	Women	Total Trans.	% of wo-men	Total Trans.	% of women
Monday	300	33	180	16	120	58
Tuesday	300	40	180	47	120	42
Wednesday	300	36	180	33	120	41
Thursday	300	33	180	22	120	50
Friday	300	40	180	26	120	59
Saturday	300	42	120	35	180	48
Sunday	440	45	100	21	340	43

From the previous table it is clear that the percentage of women participation is divided unequally between Madras and Delhi programmes. Madras takes up nearly 15% of the 40% participation and the rest is from Delhi. The percentage of women participation in televised programmes on Indian Television is definitely more than that of the countries like Denmark, Sweden and Finland. The Scandinavian research review reported women is less than 20 percent of the television roles (Anderson and Korsgard, 1978). In Norway, female charachers occupied only 26 percent of the roles. (Tsuda, 1975). Both the British (Koerbar, 1977) and the German (Kuchenhoff, 1975) analysis reveal, the under representation of women in News, as well as in Dramatic programmes on Television. These analysis also correspond to the general trends noted in the North American content where there is under-representation of women.

The portrayal of women in Television.

There are a variety of programmes on Health, Adult Education, Industrial world, Rural-folk etc. telecast in Madras Television apart from their films, plays, and other entertaining and cultural programmes. It has been observed that most of these programmes include women specifically in two roles.

(a) If the item is a discussion, then the woman is an interviewer, moderator or a compeer.

(b) If the item is a skit, then the woman generally takes the role of a traditional wife or a mother.

Analysts point out that in discussion, in a majority of the situations, the woman participate either as compeer or as an interviewer with prepared statements questions. In many cases they appear self-conscious giving the impression observer, that even while performing a particular role on Television they appear as a modest, shy housewife.

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This view is also expressed by one of the respondents of the indepth interviews, who stated that 'women do not exhibit any particular flair or interest in the topic they are discussing'. They also concur in the feeling that these 'participants are overdressed and rarely impress upon you as professionals who are aware of the subject, they are dealing with. Also there is an inference, that woman is used more in discussions as interviewers to project the achievements of the men she is interviewing and she herself is rarely the subject of the programme. The projection of women in Madras programmes also differ from that of National programmes, where more women are portrayed as interviewees than as interviewers. The following factual details help to substantiate this arguement.

Discusion in a fortnight	Total No. of women	Announcer/ Interviewer/ Scorer.	Interviewees
Madras Programmes:			
28	38	29 (Out of 38)	9 (Out of this 6 are in 'Homes' prog.)
National Programmes:-			
13	42	13	24

This marked difference in the Delhi programmes in depicting women as compared to Madras programmes has been mentioned in our in depth interviews. They not only appreciate the superior quality of production, but also mention that the portrayals are true to life. It was also observed that in Delhi programmes, in any discussion pertaining to any field, there is always a woman expert, but this is not the case with Madras programmes. But this cannot be a serious charge against Madras Television as in the interview with the producer of Madras Television she h categorically stated that participation of women in the programme also depends

on their participation in public life, and all the women experts in the city had been taken note of and duly covered in the local programmes. The second reason is while National Network has access, to women of all states in the country and provide for their participation in the National programmes, the Madras programmes being regional in character has to include those who are available to them.

The Madras programmes lend support to the view point of one of the respondents in the interview that "It is still a man's world - whether at the office, at home or while you are driving on the road". The women participation in the areas of Medicine, Industry, Agriculture is negligible, as observed from the analysis of two weeks programmes.

The treatment given to women issues in National Programmes also seems to differ from that of Madras Programmes. Women problems like, dowry harassment, prostitution and similar social issues are taken up and discussed threadbare. Since such programmes go under the programmes meant for general public and not restricted to women's programmes, they get a wider exposure. This is a point that merits consideration. At times, even though there are thought provoking, interesting Special Audience Programmes (meant for Rural folk, Industrial workers, Youth, Women, Children etc.) by the local Television, the viewership is limited, because the general viewer thinks that such programmes are not meant for him and refrain from watching such programmes. This view is also brought out by one of the respondents in the interviews who states that 'the whole concept of cutting Television time under various heading limits flexibility..... instead you can have two basic divisions for the educated and the uneducated".

Plays/Serials/Skits:-

In the plays produced for Tamilian viewers, the general tendency is to portray a traditional conventional women who would have to ultimately fall at the feet of her husband, when trying to break the norms and assert herself like her male counterpart. In a majority of the plays, the women played a vital role either as the wife or the mother. There is generally a lot of importance given to the marriage as an institution and the "Thali" (A Tamil word which symbolises the marital status of the women-a golden pendant worn around the neck) as a must compulsarily worn by the women. For eg. In one of the skits presented in the Industrial workers programme (During the reference period of the content analysis), very typical scene was enacted where the heroine would rather marry a dying man than think of settling down in wedlock with someone else because a 'virtuous' woman should have space for only one man in her heart and life". These extremely emotional, sentimental, portrayal of women, itself projects the weakness in their character. Many respondents condemn such "out landish sentiments" and abhor, such roles where, in the name of maintaining the tradititons and culture, the same old moral and social values are reinforced among women. The respondents had also recalled a drama which portrayed an untraditional woman in her gaudy, ultra-modern attire who goes to the extent of punishing the male but later realises her folly and seeks atonement. Very interestingly one viewer pointed out. "You try to bring about a change in the portrayal of women but you are unable to go about it fully and contradict yourself". Obviously the roles fall into the norms chalked out by the society and propagate only those which are advocated as worthy to follow. Even if it is realistic, the women viewers feel that it is high time

The portrayal of women in traditional roles is not only true of India. Other studies of TV in different countries, also confirm this picture. Women in Japanese television dramas are typically portrayed as ones seeking identity through love/ or marriage; diligently home-oriented; self-sacrificing and dependable (Murumatsn, 1977). 'The home-orientation of women' in mass media including TV is found in many countries, like Senegal Philippines, Australia and Newzealand. A systematic study of Australian prime time TV Shows (Edgar,1971) finds women commonly portrayed as acquiscent, self-depreciating and as objects of male humour. This is equally true of Latin American countries, Southern Europe and certain Asian countries. Almost everywhere it is clear that marital status is a more crucial factor in identifying women than in identifying men, and that parenthood is more frequently associated with women than men. So it is rather surprising that in a tradition bound country like India, the women are portrayed, as powerful personalities in National programmes, though this characterisation is resented by a few, because they think in real life, the women are not allowed to exist, if they try to outsmart the menfolk.

Advertisements and Women

Analysis prove that women are prefered over men for launching or improving the sales turnout of products. Before very popular programmes, there is a whole lot of advertisements with beautiful women in attractive attires. It is observed there are two contrasting roles of the image of women commonly projected by the advertisers either in the traditional role or in a modern role. The break up of advertisements with the roles of women, classified is shown in the next page:

No.of advts. In a fortnight	Total No. of women	Modern role	As Bride Prospective Bride	Wife Mother daughter	Others
108 (Advertisements which are repeated within a day are not taken into account)	261	108	16	111	26

There are women who are shown as traditional brides in a few advertisements. Eg. A bank motivating its client to save for her daughter's marriage; a facial cream applied for the bride and mother heaving a sigh of relief when the marriage takes place; a skin care ointment helps a rejected bride to be accepted etc. These advertisements convey to the viewer, that the women have to be married and to get married she has to look beautiful as well as have money. This does not apply to men.

The soaps, detergents and soft drinks are mostly sold through either mothers or wives. By bringing the housewife in the message, the advertiser indirectly tells the viewers, it is only their duty to cook and clean, wash and launder whether they are working or non-working. A respondent remarks, "One fails to see justification in these advertisements" because in reality men do use soap and drink soft drinks. She also recalled watching an advertisement on a beverage, where the women was considered special because she was serving her man the particular drink.

The advertisements with women in modern, revealing clothes has a purpose indeed they end up selling the image of the women rather than selling the product. An interviewee asks "whom are you trying to educate, you yourself are not aware of the glamour content of your advertisements. You profess to show only traditional women in your programmes in the name of your culture but allow your advertisers for a free ride". These images of women as sexually alluring siren are the

frequent recourse of the advertsing industry, working through the mass media, every where. The use of women as 'bait' in the sale of product ranging from cosmetics to liquor or cars is noted in countries like Ghana (Abbam, 1975), Norway (Werner, 1975), the United States (Dispenza, 1975), Yugoslavia (Bosanac and Pocek Matic, 1973) the Philippines (National Commission on the Role of Filippino women 1978), and India (Press Institute of India, 1975).

Though a few resent such advertisements on TV, others enjoy the ads where the happy family is projected and the women folk as housewives. They give a feeling of identity to the middle class urban women viewer.

'Homes' Programme and Women.

This programme is meant for the family but mainly only women's issues are taken up. This programme is scheduled, every week for 30 minutes duration, in the early hours of evening transmission i.e. at 6.00 p.m. This is the only programme for women by Madras Television and it is 1% of the total duration of the transmission of local programmes. The programme covers a wide range of subjects -interviews with prominent women personalities, cookery/handicraft demonstrations, discussions on women's problems, etc.

Women Prog. in a fortnight	Women organisation	Interviews with personalities	Cookery demonstration	Discussion
3	2	2	2	-

Analysis of the record of the whole year's (1985) items covered by the Home's programme also prove, that there is a wide coverage pertaining to women and home.

No.of Items in 'Homes'	Women issues	Women's Organ.	Interviews with Women	Cookery Handicraft	Health Nutrition	Misc
106	14	27	11	16	18	20

Still, the respondents are not throughly satisfied. They feel that women's issues are discussed at a surface level and enough probing is not done. Most of the programmes are only in the form of discussions that it fails to hold, the attention of the viewer (58% of the Women's programmes in 1985 constitued spoken word items); there is more of an emphasis of the women in the social service and professional women are not covered; there are not many programmes to support. But the cookery and handicrafts demonstrations in the 'homes' programmes is watched with interest by one and all. The working women find the time scheduled for the programme, makes inconvenient viewing. They also feel that enough publicity is not given for interesting programmes in 'Homes'. A few had appreciated the inclusion of male issues in this programme. (there was a programme on male impotency). In one of the informal-discussion, a woman viewer pointedly asked "what is the use of showing our plight in our programmes. We are aware of it, as it is. Make men aware". This suggestion has to be seriously considered so that 'Homes' programme instead of being marked under special audience programme could be telecast during the prime viewing time to reach one and all.

The present study has brought to light the following facts:

- Television had definitely helped to enrich the knowledge of women in Madras irrespective of their economic educational status.

-Television is undoubtedly a boon to the elderly and the middle class and lower middle class housewives, who enjoy every bit of it.

-Many upper middle class women and the upper class women viewers, remain alien ated from Madras Television. They think that TV does not cater to their tastes and needs.

-There is a marked difference between National Network and Madras TV in the portrayal of women. In participation as well as in treatment of women, National Programmes score high over Madras TV. Except for the language barrier, the educated women seem to relish the women characters presented in National Prog rammes either in the sponsored serials or in other programmes.

-The women viewers of Madras accept the traditional costumes of the women participants but do not like to see them with excessive jewellery or gaudy outfits. They suggest that TV should have more aesthetic and colour sense while preparing its settings or backdrops which should go with the costumes of the participants.

-The advertisements evoke a lot of interest among many of them. The advertisements suggestive of women's secondary status are resented by the educated few who feel TV should not allow the advertisers to nurtural such thoughts in the viewer's minds.

-Viewers hold that in the name of promoting culture TV should not perpetuate the same old moral and social values that have been imposed on women for centu ries together.

The viewers suggest that TV should project individualistic free thinking women and should produce programmes that would inspire and invoke the depressed and build in them the courage to face challenges in life.

Even the educated,upper class women do not think or talk in terms of flouting the existing norms or values of the society in which they live. They are fond of their culture, their tradition. But they are against the double standards prevalent in the society, where men continue to rule and the women continued to be ruled. They accept the concepts of marriage as a sacramant, as the ultimate in human relationships and of the marital home as a stable and autonomous unit wherein the progeny of marital partners are nurtured. What is changing is the acceptance of the family as a patriarchal institution with the men as the undisputed head of the family. The transmission that women ask for is the patriarchal to the co-partner family. She strongly believes in the solidarity of home, but equally opposes when she is branded only as a home-maker. James Halloran states "The media function is the provision of social realities where they did not exist before, or the giving of new directions to tendencies already present, in such a way that the adoption of the new attitude or form of behaviour is made a socially acceptable mode of conduct, while failure to adopt is represented as socially disapproved deviance". (Halloran, James 1970). Now the task of Indian TV is to give new positive directions to tendencies already present, so that there is an attitudinal change in the minds of viewers. Women remain passive or bold, traditional or modern by choice and not by force of moral or social conditioning. Can Indian TV achieve this? Why not?.

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